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CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN A PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM, A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY.

BLUM, J. MICHAEL * FITZPATRICK, ROBERT
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THIS DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY HAD AS ITS BASIC OBJECTIVES TO GATHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE "GREAT DECISIONS" PROGRAM WITHIN AND ACROSS COMMUNITIES AND TO DEVELOP INSTRUMENTS FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THE PROGRAM. "GREAT DECISIONS," SPONSORED BY THE FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION (FPA), IS AN 8-WEEK, ADULT STUDY-DISCUSSION PROGRAM IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. BACKGROUND INFORMATION WAS COLLECTED FROM TWO PRINCIPAL SOURCES. APPROXIMATELY 40 PARTICIPANTS IN DENVER, COLORADO, WERE INTERVIEWED ABOUT THEIR "GREAT DECISIONS" EXPERIENCES. IN ADDITION, QUESTIONNAIRES, WHICH FPA DESIGNED AND INCLUDED AMONG THE 1965 PROGRAM MATERIALS AND WHICH WERE RETURNED BY OVER 500 PARTICIPANTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, WERE OBTAINED AND ANALYZED. QUESTIONNAIRES OF THE PROGRAM WERE TRIED OUT EITHER ON THE INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS, ON THREE GREAT DECISIONS GROUPS CONVENED ESPECIALLY FOR THE STUDY, OR ON BOTH. THE INSTRUMENTS WERE REFINED ON THE BASIS OF THESE TRYOUTS. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT RESULTS WAS DISCUSSED IN TERMS OF THREE PROMINENT THEMES--(1) REWARDS OF "GREAT DECISIONS" PARTICIPATION, (2) "GREAT DECISIONS" AS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM VERSUS ACTION PROGRAM, AND (3) LIMITS ON "GREAT DECISIONS" PARTICIPATION. (JH)

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CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN A PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM: A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY

by

J. Michael Blum and Robert Fitzpatrick

American Institutes for Research

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ABSTRACT

Purpose

This study was conceived as the first study in a program of research on the Great Decisions program. Great Decisions, sponsored by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), is an eight-week, adult study-discussion program in foreign affairs. The ultimate aims of the research program would be: (1) to determine the effects of participation on members in terms of interests, activities, knowledge and attitudes; (2) to trace differences in these outcomes or effects to variations in input (member characteristics) and group programming and process; (3) to develop implications for adult discussion groups more generally within adult education; and (4) to introduce experimental modifications in programming designed to maximize favorable outcomes. The developmental study had as its basic objectives to gather background information about the structure and function of the program within and across communities and to develop instruments for further study of the program.

Procedure

Background information was collected from two principal sources. Thirty-seven participants were interviewed about their Great Decisions experiences in Denver, Colorado, a community with a strong program. In addition, questionnaires, which FPA designed and included among the 1965 program materials and which were returned by over 500 participants throughout the country, were obtained and analyzed.

Questionnaires and observational instruments which would be used in further study of the program were tried out either on the interview respondents, on three Great Decisions groups convened especially for the study, or on both. The instruments were refined on the basis of these tryouts.

Results and Conclusions

Background: Interview and Survey Results. Tentative generalizations

concerning individual and group participation were presented and implications for further research derived from them. The components of Great Decisions touched upon by the study results are: membership history of participants; membership history of the groups; mechanisms and motives for becoming involved in Great Decisions; sponsorship; organizing the discussion group; leadership; group size; composition of groups; social attraction in groups; preparation and participation; group process; group foreign affairs activity; perceived outcomes; and satisfaction.

Development of Instruments. Five research tools were developed during this project. Questionnaire I deals with motives for joining the program, expectations concerning the program, means of recruitment, and degree of previous acquaintanceship with co-participants. Questionnaire II seeks to measure the nature and extent of preparation for and participation in discussion meetings. Questionnaire III is a semantic differential type questionnaire developed to measure the participants' perceptions of various aspects of the program and their group meetings, degree of satisfaction with the program, degree and bases of attraction to their discussion group, intentions regarding future participation, and the effect of observers on the discussion meetings.

An Interaction Record has been developed to record such elements of a discussion meeting as utterances, the sequence of interaction, task vs. social utterances, and two-person interactions. The Observer's Form for Roles, Goals, Tasks and Procedures is designed to record several kinds of information; it consists of three sections: (1) a Tasks and Procedures Checklist; (2) a description form for member roles; and (3) a set of 7-point rating scales for group goals.

An overview of these results discussed the study of Great Decisions in terms of three prominent themes: rewards of Great Decisions participation; Great Decisions as educational program vs. action program; and limits on Great Decisions participation.

INTRODUCTION

Background

This report describes a developmental study conceived as the first study in a program of research on the Great Decisions program. Great Decisions, conducted by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), is an eight-week, adult study-discussion program in foreign affairs.[1]

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[1]The developmental study has been carried out in close conjunction with FPA, a "national, nonpartisan, non-profit organization, whose goal is to develop, through education, an informed, thoughtful and articulate public opinion on major issues of foreign policy." Since 1955, it has conducted the Great Decisions program, each year with an expanding group of participants. The program is thought to be the largest educational activity devoted to foreign policy questions; over the years more than a million persons in over a thousand communities have participated in Great Decisions discussion groups. An estimated 300,000 adults participated in 1965. (1966 figures are not yet available.)

The discussion groups generally consist of friends who meet once a week for eight weeks during February and March to discuss each week a topic of current foreign affairs interest. The meetings are held on an informal basis at a time and place convenient to the members, and the program is designed so that no trained discussion leader is required. The only cost to the participants is the $2 required to purchase a Fact Sheet Kit from FPA. The concise factual materials and the discussion questions contained in each Fact Sheet are designed to provide sufficient background for each discussion. Outside readings are not required, although recommended readings are included for each topic.

Great Decisions has been conducted within ongoing organizations and as a separate activity. Locally, Great Decisions has been sponsored by civic and church organizations, schools and colleges, extension services, labor and farm groups, industries, newspapers and broadcasting stations, libraries, and many other agencies. Approximately 700 local organizations or chapters of national groups participated in 1965 (1966 figures not available). In some areas, Great Decisions is a community-wide or state-wide activity, including locally produced radio and television programs and special newspaper features to supplement the discussion materials. Elsewhere, the program is often an isolated group who have heard about and obtained the Great Decisions materials.

The program has been very successful in its use of the mass media in both promotional and program activities. Special articles on each of the eight topics are distributed by United Press International; National Educational Television produces programs on Great Decisions; and several series of radio programs are available for local broadcast. In 1965, 477 newspapers, 84 television stations, and several hundred radio stations participated (1966 figures not available).

The premises of this planned program of research are: (1) that there is a need for research which would assess the effects on participants of this type of educational program; (2) that there is a need for research which would relate differences in program effects to the input (member characteristics) and the structure and process of the discussion group; (3) that such research should employ objective, behavioral measures of outcomes;[2] and (4) that such research should result in study-discussion programs which are more likely to achieve program objectives.

The ultimate purposes of the planned program of research are:

1. To assess in objective, behavioral terms the effects which participation in Great Decisions has on the public-affairs-related interests, attitudes, and behaviors of its participants.

2. To trace differential trends in these outcome measures to variations in member characteristics and group programming, composition, structure, and process.

3. To outline and interpret the implications of the research results for the conduct of adult discussion groups more generally within adult education.

4. To introduce experimental modifications in programming designed to maximize favorable program outcomes.

Objectives

This developmental study was designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To gather background information about the Great Decisions program and its structure and function within and across communities and discussion groups. Due mainly to the informality of the program,

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[2]Major studies of adult study-discussion groups have been carried out by Davis (Davis, 1960; Davis, 1961) on the Great Books program and by Kaplan (1960) on liberal arts discussion groups in the Los Angeles area, which relied principally on participant assessments.

FPA is unable to maintain a file of detailed information about program functioning at the community and subcommunity levels. The present study collected such information from multiple sources: from individual discussions and a conference with FPA personnel; from a questionnaire included among the 1965 program materials and returned by over 500 participants throughout the nation; and from interviews with participants and organizer-participants in a single locality having a strong program.

This survey of multiple information sources was expected to yield numerous insights into the range and distribution of the variations among Great Decisions discussion programs and groups.

2. To refine the research concepts and variables which had been defined on an a priori basis and presented in the study proposal so that they might more adequately reflect the nature of the dimensions along which Great Decisions groups actually vary. The original conceptualization, presented in Appendix A, generated a number of data collecting instruments which are described herein.

3. To develop questionnaires and scales for measuring outcomes and observational instruments for recording program conditions. A number of instruments have been developed which are of a general type of format and thus applicable from year to year. Content-specific instruments (such as attitude inventories and knowledge tests), which would be used during a full scale study of program outcomes, would be more appropriately developed when the study topics to be covered during the period of research are known.

4. To try out these instruments and to refine them on the basis of the tryouts.

Efforts toward the first two objectives of the study are reflected in a series of preliminary generalizations developed in the first part of the Results and Conclusions section. These statements are intended to serve as working hypotheses; each is accompanied by implications for further research.

METHOD

Information Gathering

Samples and sources. Preliminary background was accumulated informally through a review of descriptive materials on the program which included an examination of the results of previous studies of the program (FPA, 1959; FPA, 1960; Wanderer, 1963; Hattery, 1964). It should be noted that the emphasis of the present study was distinct from that of earlier studies. The present emphasis was on the group experience and its relations to behavioral outcomes of participation, while previous Great Decisions studies emphasized research into the extent and distribution of participation and participant assessments of preparation, participation and outcomes.

A second informal source consisted of conversations and correspondence with executives of FPA and with the director and associate director of the regional FPA office at Boulder, Colorado. In addition, a conference was held at FPA headquarters in New York to discuss research results and their implications for continuing research. The conference was attended by the project staff and by executives, central office professional staff, and Northeastern regional representatives of FPA. Many of the interpretive statements and implications for research discussed in the Results and Conclusions section are direct products of this conference.

A third source of background data was the 547 Great Decisions survey questionnaires received from a national sample of participants in the 1965 program. This sampling is not assumed to be either representative or random, but is of value in the areas of information which allow comparison with the Denver sample described below. The survey does represent a fairly wide geographical distribution of participants in that well over a hundred communities in 37 states are represented by at least one return. The exact distribution of these returns is described in Appendix C. These survey questionnaires, which were included on the back page of the Great Decisions Fact Kit until the present year, deal with assorted demographic characteristics, reasons for joining Great Decisions, types of preparation for meetings, etc.

The final source of information was a series of interviews with 1966 participants from Denver, Colorado. Denver was selected as the site of this study because of its strong program and because of the proximity of the regional FPA office in Boulder. The selection of respondents for interviewing was basically purposive, the intention being to select respondents who represented as many different discussion groups as possible. Furthermore, it was deemed desirable to interview a high proportion of persons who had organized discussion groups so as to obtain a sample of presumably highly involved participants and insights into the problems of establishing and maintaining a group. Thirty-seven participants were interviewed. Of these, twenty-five had been to some degree responsible for organizing their discussion groups, and twelve had merely participated; 24 were women and 13 men. Seven respondents were interviewed in an unstructured fashion, prior to the development of a structured interview guide (five organizers and two participants; four women and two men). The remaining thirty respondents were administered a structured interview guide; the results and conclusions of the background portion of the study are based principally on their reports. These latter thirty respondents come from 23 different Denver discussion groups with an estimated total membership of 346.

Analysis of survey data. Individual survey returns were punched on data cards and tabulated and analyzed by electronic computer. The survey questions are reproduced in Appendix C.

Denver interview scheduling and procedures. The Mountains and Plains Regional Office of FPA obtained the names of persons who had purchased multiple Great Decisions Fact Kits from the Adult Education Division of the Denver Public Library. Multiple kit purchasers were assumed to be members of groups who were purchasing kits for the group. The Project Associate made two trips to the Denver-Boulder area. During the first trip, he conducted pilot interviews with seven of these multiple kit purchasers who had been previously contacted by the Director of the regional office. The Project Associate then met to discuss interview problems with two consultants affiliated with the Department of Psychology at the University of Colorado. The pilot interviews and the meeting with the consultants

resulted in a final version of a structured interview guide. The final activity of this visit was the orientation of three interviewers to their duties. The interviewers are graduate students in the Department of Psychology at the University of Colorado who had been recommended by the consultants. The remaining interviews were conducted by these interviewers using the interview guide.

Prior to their interviewing, the interviewers were briefed on the Great Decisions program by the FPA regional staff. The regional office also supplied them with lists of potential respondents. The persons on these lists had been previously introduced to the study and asked to cooperate in a letter from the regional director. Actual interview appointments were scheduled by telephone by the interviewers for mutually convenient times and places. The interviewers mailed their interview guides to the project staff for coding and analysis.

Interview guide. The interview guide is presented in Appendix B, in combination with the interview results. The questions are organized into the following sections: General Information, Preparation and Participation, Group Function, Perceived Outcomes, Actions, and Satisfaction. The guide consists of 20 open-ended questions with associated probes and three checklist sections marked by respondents, which were administered as follows: General Information section consisting of ten open-ended type questions; the eleven-item Preparation and Participation checklist; seven open-ended type questions in the Group Function section; the eight-item Perceived Outcomes checklist; three open-ended type questions in the Actions section; and the six-item Satisfaction checklist. The checklist sections were used to minimize the overall time required for the interview.

Development of Instruments

Procedure. In addition to the interview guide, a number of questionnaires and scales for measuring program outcomes and observational instruments for recording program conditions were developed. These instruments, their relationship to the long-term study plan, and their intended applications are described in the Results and Conclusions section. All these

instruments have been tried out, either on the respondents, on Great Decisions groups which met especially for this study, or on both. The instruments and the nature of their respective tryouts are as follows:

1. Questionnaires

   a. Questionnaire I - Tried out on "special" group members.

   b. Questionnaire II - Tried out on "special" group members and on respondents (identical with Preparation and Participation Checklist given to respondents).

   c. Questionnaire III - Tried out on "special" groups.

   d. Political Action Checklist - The Perceived Outcomes checklist represents a first attempt at a type of Political Action checklist and was tried out on the respondents.

2. Observational Instruments

   a. Interaction Record - Tried out on "special" groups.

   b. Observer's Checklist for Roles, Goals, Tasks and Procedures - Tried out on "special" groups.

As a consequence of the tryouts, refinements have been introduced into the instruments and/or the instructions for their use. These refinements are discussed in the Results and Conclusions section.

Tryout samples. The structured-interview respondent sample was described earlier. The "special" groups were special sessions conducted by the partial membership of three Denver Great Decisions groups which had participated together as groups during the regularly scheduled program in February and March. Five persons attended each of these special sessions. Group I was composed entirely of women; Groups II and III were composed, respectively, of three men and two women and two men and three women. These groups might be considered atypical of Great Decisions groups generally, since two of them had remained essentially intact since the inception of the program in Denver eight years ago, and the other was seven years old. However, this point would seem to be irrelevant to the present purpose of instrument tryouts.

The cooperation of these particular groups had been tentatively obtained during the pilot interviews, when respondents suggested that their enthusiastic groups would enjoy meeting especially for the study.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Background: Interview and Survey Results

This section lists a series of preliminary generalizations concerning individual and group participation in the Great Decisions program. These statements are based primarily on the Denver sample of 30 respondents who were administered the prepared interview guide and partially on the 1965 national survey of participants (N = 537 usable returns). These statements should, by no means, be taken to represent Great Decisions participation generally or even necessarily as representative of participation in Denver, Colorado. Rather, they will be useful within the context of the program of research as working hypotheses about the kinds of variation among Great Decisions groups within a given community and across individual participants within that community.

For the most part, the following section will be interpretive in content. Reference will usually be made to appropriate appendix sections for the tabulated data.

1. Membership history of participants. A strikingly high proportion of the Denver sample reported Great Decisions participation previous to that of the present year (25 of 30 respondents had prior experience; the median years of previous participation was 4.50. See Appendix B, items 1a and 1b.)

2. Membership history of the groups. The respondents in this sample belonged to a total of 23 different discussion groups. The median group life of these groups was 3.13 years. More than half of these groups were reported to have retained at least 41% of their initial membership.

   Implications for research. Relatively experienced Great Decisions participants and relatively long term Great Decisions groups (which continue essentially intact over a period of years) would appear to be very common in the Denver program. Denver and similar communities would afford the opportunity for research designed to:

(1) analyze the factors most responsible for year to year participation and for stable group life; (2) study differential program outcomes in more experienced participants and older groups as opposed to newer participants and groups; and (3) study the potential interactive effect of participant experience and group age on outcome variables.

3. Mechanisms and motives for becoming involved in Great Decisions. Both survey and interview results indicate that people are most likely to become involved in Great Decisions through membership in an organization which decides to adopt Great Decisions as a part of its program. There are groups, however, that will continue to meet in the absence of continued sponsorship by the organization. (See Appendix B, item 2a and Appendix C, item 6.) Survey and interview results most frequently elicit "becoming informed" and "gaining knowledge" as motives for joining. (See Appendix B, item 2b and Appendix C, item 9.)

   Implications for research. To an unusual degree, intellectual motives for joining are reported, and social motives are not reported. If the matter is to be studied more deeply, some control for social desirability of self-reports should be used; it may be seen as quite respectable to cite intellectual motives but less respectable to cite social motives. Motives for joining might be most reliably assessed by less direct techniques, such as projective items.

4. Sponsorship. The Denver groups were more likely to be unsponsored groupings of neighbors and/or friends than sponsored by a formal organization, although this difference is small. Churches were the most frequent sponsor (5 of 13 sponsored groups). (See Appendix B, item 3.)

   Implications for research. In the Denver sample, sponsored and unsponsored groups are almost equally common. Sponsored and unsponsored groups should be sampled in equal or nearly equal numbers in a large scale study of the program.

5. Organizing the discussion group. A large proportion of the study subjects reported playing some part in organizing their discussion group. Fifty per cent of the Denver respondents and 39% of the survey subjects reported having helped to organize their groups. It is likely that many of these played minimal roles, however. (See Appendix B, item 4 and Appendix C, item 5.)

   Implications for research. Organizer vs. non-organizer may be considered to be one objective index of degree of participation, which could be included in attempts to assess the effects of differential participation rates on satisfaction and other program outcomes. The above result suggests that there would probably not be a shortage of "organizers" to study.

6. Leadership. Twenty-two of the respondents reported having led at least one meeting (Appendix B, item 5). This report seems inconsistent with the results of Appendix B, item 12, which indicate that 13 of the 23 sample groups were led by a single person throughout the program, and ten groups had rotating leadership.

   Implications for research. Leadership patterns in Great Decisions groups might often be expected to vary from week to week; if rotation of leadership duties is common (and in the absence of any formal rules for leadership), the type of leadership would tend to reflect the personality qualities of the leader for the week. Stability of leadership vs. rotation of leadership might be compared for their effects on certain outcome measures.

7. Group size. The most commonly reported group size in the Denver sample is 11-15 persons. In the national survey, an estimated 43% of the groups were composed of 6-10 persons, and 30% of the groups were composed of 11-15 persons. The typical Great Decisions group might be expected to have ten members and the typical meeting anywhere from six to ten attendees when allowing for absences. (See Appendix B, item 6 and Appendix C, item 7.)

   Implications for research. Great Decisions groups would seem to be of generally manageable proportions and within theoretically

optimal limits for productive discussion. Research might focus on the reasons for group size. Of particular interest is the possibility that certain groups may have evolved toward optimum group size. Finally, these compact groups offer the methodological advantage of relative ease in recording the interaction among members.

8. Composition of groups.

(a) Sex. The Denver groups were generally of two types: those evenly split between men and women (12 groups) and those having all women (9 groups). No all male groups were reported. Women represented 66% or 229 of the estimated 346 participants. (See Appendix B, item 7.) This latter figure is fairly consistent with the national survey in which 75% of those returning the questionnaires are women. (See Appendix C, item 13.)

(b) Age. Denver Great Decisions groups would appear to be relatively diverse on an age basis. Less than one-third (7) of the sample groups were reported to have an age spread of ten years or less. However, in certain cases the range estimate may have been an unreliable measure of actual age variance, if the group had only one or two relatively old or young members. (See Appendix B, item 8.) The best present estimate of the typical age of participants is the mean age of 42 for the survey returns. (See Appendix C, item 13.)

(c) Socio-economic level. All Denver groups were described as middle or upper middle class. Two of these basically middle class groups were described as having one or two upper class members. Socio-economic homogeneity seems to be the rule. (See Appendix B, item 8.)

(d) Political affiliation and opinions. Roughly half of the Denver groups could be considered politically diverse and half politically homogeneous. (See Appendix B, item 8.)

e. Religion. Most of the Denver groups can be considered, on the basis of respondent reports of the numbers of Protestants, Catholic, Jews, etc., to be either moderately or highly diverse religiously. (See Appendix B, item 8.)

f. Overall. Respondents were asked to rate the overall homogeneity-diversity of their group's composition. Respondents were given the categories very diverse, diverse, homogeneous, and very homogeneous; more groups were rated homogeneous than any other category. This is despite what would appear to be the obvious social desirability of reporting diversity in this context. In Appendix B, item 8g, these overall ratings are compared to the degree of diversity ratings assigned to three selected groups' characteristics as described by respondents: age spread, political affiliation, and opinion content. The agreement between overall ratings and the specific factors is quite low. It is likely that this open-ended approach was answered with varied frames of reference: e.g., for some respondents, religious composition may have been the most salient dimension in deciding on an overall rating; for others, opinion content was most salient, etc. Finally, examination of the results of item 8g reveals a strong tendency for sponsored groups to be homogeneous groups (9 of 10 groups), while unsponsored groups were equally likely to be rated homogeneous or diverse.

Implications for research

(1) Biographical data questionnaire. In pursuing a large scale research program, biographical data of the above kinds would be obtained from all members of study groups to furnish objective bases of determining group composition. Opinion composition would be assessed using pre-program opinionnaires.

(2) In talking informally with participants and in the pilot interviews, many put a high value on diversity of opinion and its stimulative effect on discussion and intellectual satisfactions. One suggestive present finding is that five of the seven oldest

groups in the study were unsponsored groups rated as diverse or very diverse. An important topic for further scrutiny would be the relationships between group composition and member satisfaction and group life. Further study should also analyze the extent to which satisfactions and group life are a function of social attraction as separate from the possible intellectual attractiveness of diversity and other factors.

(3) Do sponsored groups tend to be more homogeneous groups than unsponsored?

9. Social attraction in groups. Denver Great Decisions participants tended to know at least a few persons in their group before they joined, most often made their acquaintance through common membership in an organization, and engaged in a moderate amount of social interaction with co-members outside the group. On the surface, at least, strong social motives for Great Decisions participation are not in evidence in this study. (See Appendix B, item 10; see also Appendix B, item 2.)

Implications for research. It should again be stressed that future research efforts should make strong, objective efforts to separate "intellectual" and social motives and the differential consequences of each.

10. Preparation and participation. Tables 1-4 are concerned with preparation for and participation in the meetings. (The checklist is reproduced at the end of Appendix B.) It will be observed that these results are based on the respondents and on 14 "special" group members to whom the Preparation and Participation Checklist was administered. (One member arrived too late for this checklist.) Table 1 indicates that attendance of this sample was quite respectable. Table 2 indicates that: (1) participants read their Fact Sheets, typically devoting an hour to two hours to them each week; (2) readings suggested in the Fact Sheets are rarely used; and (3) other readings are frequently used, but one must suspect that these are for the most part routine news magazine and newspaper readings. Table 3 indicates

Table 1

Attendance at Meetings

(N = 44 subjects = 30 respondents and 15 "special" group members)

	Meetings Attended								
Meetings Held	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Group held 9 meetings (N = 4)								2	2
Group held 8 meetings (N = 37)				2	1	5	14	15	
Group held 6 meetings (N = 1)						1			
Group held 2 meetings (N = 2)		2							

Note: Underlined numbers are respondents with 100% attendance.

Table 2

Preparation for Great Decisions Meetings: Readings

(N = 44)

Source	None	Time Devoted: An hour or less	1-2 hours	More than 2 hours
FACT SHEETS				
Group I	0	2	2	1
Group II	0	3	0	1
Group III	0	2	3	0
Respondents	1	9	16	4
Overall	1	16	21	6
SUGGESTED READINGS				
Group I	2	1	0	2
Group II	2	2	0	0
Group III	4	1	0	0
Respondents	18	7	3	2
Overall	26	11	3	4
OTHER READINGS				
Group I	1	2	0	2
Group II	1	1	1	1
Group III	0	3	2	0
Respondents	6	7	9	8
Overall	8	13	12	11

Table 3

Preparation for Great Decisions Meetings: Mass Media

(N = 44)

Source	None	Number Used 1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	Not Available
UPI ARTICLES						
Group I	0	1	2	1	1	0
Group II	0	4	0	0	0	0
Group III	2	2	0	0	1	0
Respondents	3	14	2	3	7	1
Overall	5	21	4	4	9	1
NET BROADCASTS						
Group I	0	3	2	0	0	0
Group II	1	3	0	0	0	0
Group III	2	3	0	0	0	0
Respondents	6	11	5	1	4	3
Overall	9	20	7	1	4	3
RADIO BROADCASTS						
Group I	2	3	0	0	0	0
Group II	2	2	0	0	0	0
Group III	5	0	0	0	0	0
Respondents	14	8	1	0	3	4
Overall	23	13	1	0	3	4

Table 4

Trends in Participation and Preparation

1. How would you describe your participation in the meetings?

	Very Active	Moderately Active	Not Very Active	Inactive
Group I (N=5)	3	2	0	0
Group II (N=4)	3	1	0	0
Group III (N=5)	0	5	0	0
Respondents (N=30)	16	14	0	0
Overall	22	22	0	0

2. During the course of the program, my participation in the meetings:

	Increased Greatly	Increased Slightly	Decreased Slightly	Decreased Greatly	Stayed About the Same
Group I (N=5)	2	0	0	0	3
Group II (N=4)	2	1	1	0	0
Group III (N=5)	0	2	0	0	3
Respondents (N=30)	1	3	3	1	22
Overall	5	6	4	1	28

3. During the course of the program, my preparation for the meetings:

	Increased Greatly	Increased Slightly	Decreased Slightly	Decreased Greatly	Stayed About the Same
Group I (N=5)	2	0	1	0	2
Group II (N=4)	1	1	1	0	1
Group III (N=5)	0	2	0	0	3
Respondents (N=30)	0	7	3	0	20
Overall	3	10	5	0	26

relatively low usage of all the major supporting mass media presentations: UPI articles; NET broadcasts; and radio broadcasts. Table 4 indicates that: (1) all members described themselves as very active or moderately active participants (item 1); (2) the program appears to have moderate effects on participation and preparation, since only moderate changes were reported (items 2 and 3).

Implications for research. The need for some objective recording of actual participation rates (Interaction Record) is indicated by the fact that all participants describe themselves as active.

11. Group process (See Appendix B, items 11-14.)

(a) All but one group were "led."

(b) Most groups used one person as a regular leader.

(c) Most leaders were seen as having elicited participation adequately.

(d) Several respondents indicated that their group's leadership was not strong enough; i.e., the group was not kept in focus,

(e) FPA's Opinion Ballots were used in all but six groups. This is understandable since use of these ballots is recommended in the Fact Sheets.

(f) Expression of individual opinion as opposed to group opinion (consensus) was stressed in all but three of the groups which used the ballot. In general, the groups did not see reaching consensus as a goal of their groups.

(g) A large proportion of the groups brought in outside speakers at least once, although this is not specifically recommended in the FPA Fact Sheet.

(h) Various other devices were used infrequently to supplement FPA furnished materials.

Implications for research. Further study on Great Decisions would include close observation of groups in action. The first and obvious duty of observers would be to maintain interaction records, since these would reflect participation rates, and participation rates

are expected to be highly related to both input and output measures. But, in addition, observers will record the process variables, individual role enactments, tasks and procedures which are expected to be highly related to output measures. Different meeting formats are likely to differ in their contributions to group goal attainment.

12. Group foreign affairs activity. (See Appendix B, items 15-16.) Group foreign affairs participation was negligible. No groups conducted the "issues conference" (group meeting with representative) recommended by FPA, although one group made an unsuccessful attempt to hold such a conference. One might conclude that the groups saw discussion of issues and/or individual satisfactions as sufficient goals in themselves.

13. Perceived outcomes: General. Table 5 shows the results of the Perceived Outcomes Checklist (an initial approach to a political actions checklist). Many positive changes as a result of Great Decisions participation are indicated.

    Implications for research. Future research should determine through tests of knowledges, abilities, and attitudes, and through observations of actions, the extent to which actual changes occur.

14. Perceived outcomes: Opinion changes. Responses to an open-ended question on opinion changes yielded a varied array of changes: opinions "changed," were made "more flexible," "broadened," were "clarified," etc. (See Appendix B, item 18.)

    Implications for research. A larger research program should be designed to detect both specific opinion changes on issues and changes in broad "habits" of thought: analytical skills, flexibility, etc.

15. Perceived outcomes: Letter-writing. Six respondents reported writing a letter to a newspaper or other publication during or since participation in Great Decisions; of these, four persons

Table 5

Outcomes of Great Decisions as Perceived by Respondents

(N = 30)

	Increased	Decreased	About the same
1. Knowledge of public affairs	28	0	2
2. Reading about public affairs	23	0	7
3. Listening, watching public affairs broadcasts, speeches, etc.	19	0	11
4. Talking to people (outside Great Decisions) about public affairs	17	0	13
5. My ability to discuss public affairs	19	0	11
6. Objectivity	17	0	13
7. Tolerance for disagreement	15	0	15
8. Discussion skills	12	0	18

had written a letter prior to belonging to Great Decisions. Eight respondents reported having some sort of communication with a public official. Thus, roughly half the participants wrote at least one letter during or since Great Decisions participation. The national survey indicated a higher incidence of letter-writing (65% of the sample at least once), which may mostly reflect a difference in question wording (the survey asked for letters written "in the past three years.").

16. Participant satisfaction. Table 6 indicates highly favorable respondent attitudes toward both the program and the discussion groups. Intentions to participate again and with the same group are a strong indication of satisfaction.

Implications for research. The important problem for additional research to examine is the degree of association between reported satisfaction and actual educational benefits. To what extent is the program of real educational benefit rather than an adequate time killer?

Development of Instruments

This section lists the instruments which have been developed and indicates refinements in them that have been made or will be made.

1. Questionnaire I deals with motives for joining the program, expectations concerning the program, means of recruitment, degree of previous acquaintanceship with co-participants. (See Appendix D.)

Refinements

(1) It was found that "special" group members did not adhere to the instructions for marking items 2 and 4. The revised version will use heavy underlining under critical portions of instructions.

(2) Concerning item 4, motives and expectations, it was

Table 6

Respondent Satisfaction with Program

(N = 30)

	Very Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Moderately Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Overall Satisfaction	12	18	0	0
	Very Likely	Fairly Likely	Fairly Unlikely	Very Likely
Participation next year	22	7	1	0
	Strongly Encourage	Moderately Encourage	Discourage	Say Nothing
Encourage friends to join	22	8	0	0
	Very much	Somewhat	Not very much	Not at all
Would like to participate in same group again	18	11	1	0
	Very Productive	Moderately Productive	Moderately Unproductive	Very Unproductive
This year's group compared to other groups known	7	17	6	0
	Liked Very Much	Liked	Disliked	Disliked Very Much
	15	14	1	0
	Very Important	Moderately Important	Moderately Unimportant	Very Unimportant
	10	15	5	0
	Very Likely	Fairly Likely	Fairly Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Participation in other discussion group next year	13	8	8	1

mentioned earlier that less direct techniques might be used to uncover underlying motives for joining which may not be adequately tapped due to a possible social desirability bias in favor of "intellectual" motives. If a checklist type of item is used again, an effort will be made to develop an item(s) which presents a relatively independent set of motivations, so that subjects can be more clearly separated on: learning motivations; skill acquisition motives; political action motives; social motives; etc.

2. Questionnaire II seeks to measure the nature and extent of preparation for and participation in discussion meetings, (See Appendix E.) Future work would supplement or perhaps supplant participation questions with the interaction record. This type of questionnaire would be administered on several occasions during the program and most likely the specific wording would be changed where necessary to measure preparation in connection with a particular meeting. One defect noted in this questionnaire was the absence of a "none" category in the section on mass media preparation.

3. Questionnaire III. A semantic differential type questionnaire has been developed to measure the participants' perceptions of various aspects of the program and their group meetings, degree of satisfaction with the program, degree and bases of attraction to their discussion group, intentions regarding future participation, and the effect of observers on the discussion meetings. (See Appendix F.) As with Questionnaire II, this instrument is intended to be applied on several occasions throughout the program, and it will be observed that the question wordings are directed at a particular meeting. (This questionnaire was tried out on "special" group members; they were asked to answer them with reference to a "typical" meeting during the program.) Several modifications in this questionnaire are needed: (1) a revised format should incorporate wider spacing between items, since

there was a tendency to miss items; (2) an item should be included to obtain specific evaluations on FPA's opinion ballots, since this is a topic which many participants comment on spontaneously; and (3) the third item under overall ratings should be dropped, clarified, or expanded, since this item was ambiguous for numerous participants.

Observational Instruments

1. Interaction Record. An interaction recording scheme and record forms have been developed. Elements which are recorded include utterances, the sequence of interaction, task vs. social utterances, and two-person interactions. Instructions for observers and tabulation forms for the various interaction components have been prepared. (See Appendix G.) From the recorded components, it will be possible to assess individual participation rates, communication patterns, task leadership (based on volume of task utterances), social leadership (based on volume of social utterances), etc. The interaction record was found to be quite easy to use (even by one observer with no previous experience in group observation). One defect in the recording scheme was encountered, however. The original instructions make no provision for handling situations in which the group splinters; i.e., spontaneously breaks into two or more subgroups carrying on separate discussions. It would probably be feasible, except in especially large groups, to have the observer record this situation by placing a vertical bar in his recording column and recording the two separate discussions on either side of this bar. If the situation is one in which he is overwhelmed by the multiple recording task, he might insert a special notation to indicate the splintered situation and also note its duration. In the tryout groups which were observed and in considerable previous group observation experience, these splintered situations have ordinarily been of relatively short duration; usually one member is quickly successful in drawing the group's attention back to the central focus.

2. Observer's Form for Roles, Goals, Tasks and Procedures. This instrument is designed to record several kinds of information, while placing a minimal burden on the observer, who is likely to be quite occupied with interaction recording. It consists of three sections: (1) a Tasks and Procedures Checklist, maintained during the meeting; (2) a description form for member roles; and (3) a set of seven-point rating scales for group goals, completed as soon as possible after the meeting. (See Appendix H.) The applicability of this instrument to the "special" group meetings was somewhat limited; many of the usual devices, rules, and procedures which this instrument is designed to measure were not used at these "special" meetings; e.g., no Fact Sheets or opinion ballots were used. Group I discussed Viet Nam a second time, without the benefit of a Fact Sheet or their usual special preparation; Groups II and III conducted very informal discussions based on a volume of the FPA "Headline Series" dealing with Eastern Europe. Despite this limited tryout, it is anticipated that the present form of this instrument will be adequate for its purposes.

DISCUSSION

This exploration of Great Decisions has attempted to touch upon most of the major components of the program. From an overview of these varied data, several themes seem prominent. These themes might well serve as foci for additional study of the program.

Rewards of Great Decisions Participation

The present evidence indicates strongly that Great Decisions provides sizable rewards for participants. This evidence consists chiefly in the relatively low rates of turnover in groups and the repeated participation and expressed satisfaction of most subjects. But the present study has merely posed, rather than resolved, the question of the nature of these rewards. Three classes of rewards have been mentioned frequently in discussing the findings.

1. Learning satisfactions. Learning motives were significantly involved in prompting participation. Learning and information gain were the most frequently expressed gains of participation.

2. Intellectual excitement. Preliminary evidence was found to indicate a relationship between group diversity and group life. In response to various questions, group membership diversity (and the consequent challenge of ideas) was mentioned favorably. Participants universally either applauded the presence of diversity in their group or bemoaned its absence.

3. Social rewards. Social rewards are a ubiquitous fact of group life. To a large extent they may have been taken for granted or suppressed in favor of loftier motives in the reports of the present respondents. In a larger study, objective indices would be used to measure the strength of social rewards for individuals and groups.

Each of the above is likely to be a source of reward for many participants; the relative importance of each under different conditions needs to be determined. Moreover, a comprehensive evaluation of the program would go beyond these perceived rewards by looking for measurable changes in skills, knowledge, interests and attitudes consistent with program goals.

Great Decisions as Educational Program vs. Action Program

The present research yielded little evidence of Great Decisions as a vehicle for or inducer of strong political action motivations. Rather, rewards seemed to reside in the group participation per se and the results of study-discussion.

FPA provides the Opinion Ballot as a handy political expression device. Leaders are asked to mail the group's ballots to a local headquarters for tabulation or a tabulation of them directly to United States senators, representatives, and/or the Secretary of State, if no local tabulation center is maintained. Thus, the ballot is a potentially easy to use and potent means of expression. The present study did not examine the extent to which these ballots are sent to persons in positions of power.

Further research should follow up on the theme of knowledge gain vs. action and the potential for each within Great Decisions. A survey of opinion ballot usage and impact would be a valuable aspect of such research.

Limits on Great Decisions Participation

In the present preliminary analysis, certain "limits" on participation were observed. These consist of tendencies toward kinds of specialization which seem to be neither inevitable nor necessary components of the program. Some examples are:

1. Great Decisions is (if one generalizes from the present data) a heavily feminine program.

2. Great Decisions preparation for meetings seems to be largely confined to the basic program materials and seems lacking in special initiative.

3. Great Decisions groups, left to their own devices, follow simple meeting patterns. Imaginative programming is not characteristic of the research groups.

4. Groups tend toward homogeneity of membership; this is in spite of indications that many members consider diversity to be rewarding.

5. Groups tend to build their program around the Fact Sheet and Opinion Ballots. Usage of the supporting mass media materials was light among the present sample.

Continuing research would seek to discover, validate, and understand tendencies such as the above. Its ultimate aims would be to relate these tendencies to differential outcomes for participants and to effectively apply these research results to the Great Decisions program.

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APPENDIX A

VARIABLES RELEVANT TO STUDY OF GREAT DECISIONS

APPENDIX A

VARIABLES RELEVANT TO STUDY OF GREAT DECISIONS

Outcomes

FPA has set forth the following general objectives as those of all their programs:

- "Wider and keener awareness and apprecation of the significance for individual Americans of international affairs in general, and of particular foreign relations problems, policies, and programs.
- Greater knowledge about international affairs, and about foreign policies and programs.
- Greater understanding of important trends and forces, and relationships among these, in international affairs.
- Greater skill in analyzing, discussing and expressing objective views about these matters.
- Certain general attitudes in this field, such as a strong interest in foreign affairs; a willingness to suspend judgment when the available information is ambiguous, unreliable, or inadequate; a willingness to change one's views as new information or understanding becomes available; etc.
- Certain general habits of thought, such as perceiving other nations as pluralistic, not monolithic; analyzing the behavior of national leaders as [products of] complex personalities; recognizing the role played by economic, cultural, political and sociological forces, etc.
- Explicit opinions on major foreign policy issues or programs, or at least on general principles and national postures. (Although eager that people develop and express their own policy views, an educational organization need not itself, of course, advocate or oppose particular foreign policy positions or programs.)
- Behavior reflecting the above changes. This includes: expressing and discussing views with friends, neighbors, coworkers; writing letters to the newspaper; giving speeches; communications to congressional representatives and the Department of State; establishing policies or planning programs for schools, libraries, voluntary organizations, etc.; voting; participation in partisan political activities; and so on."

For each of these objectives, there are several possible indicators of the relative success or failure of the Great Decisions program. The criteria classified below would be the outcome variables of the research program.

1. Participation within the Great Decisions Program

   a. Attendance. Records would be kept regarding the attendance at meetings. An analysis of changes in the membership during the period of the program would be made.

   b. Preparation. Information would be collected regarding the degree to which participants prepared for the meetings by studying their Fact Sheets, by reviewing recommended readings, by viewing the special television programs, by listening to radio programs, by reading the Great Decisions materials syndicated in newspapers by United Press International, and by other means.

   c. Participation. Data would be collected which would pertain to the relative contributions of the individual members to the meetings. From these data an analysis would be made of the distribution of participation within the discussion group.

2. Perceptions of Participation

   a. Satisfaction. Participants would be questioned regarding their satisfaction with: the structure of the program; their own discussion group; the Great Decisions materials, e.g., the Fact Sheet Kit; the mass media presentations and the outcomes for themselves, e.g., increased knowledge.

   b. Future participation. Participants would be questioned regarding their intentions to participate or not participate in future Great Decisions and/or similar programs.

3. Changes on Specified Topics

   a. Changes in information level. Information gain on the topics of the Great Decisions program would be assessed by means of a before-after design.

   b. Attitude valence (content). If the program does produce active thought, opinions are likely to be developed or to change. Attitudes on the topics of the program would be measured before and after the program.

   c. Attitude intensity. The intensity or resistance to change of attitudes may be expected to undergo change which might vary in relation to or independently of changes in attitude valence.

4. Changes in General Attitudes, Outlook and Action Tendencies

   a. Changes in analytical predispositions. Before and after measurements would be obtained of: tolerance for information in conflict with one's opinions; realization of the complexity and scope of international affairs; and willingness to engage in rational debate on questions of values.

b. Changes in the perception of potency. Before and after measures would be obtained of the participant's perception of his ability to influence public affairs and his perception of the degree to which public affairs can be influenced by one individual's sentiments and actions.

5. Political Action

a. Intra-program action. FPA promotes two types of political action within the Great Decisions program, the Opinion Ballot and the Issues Conference. Records would be kept regarding the degree to which members as individuals or as a group engaged in these two types of activity during or immediately following the program.

b. Extra-program actions. Examples of such action are many: soliciting the views of legislators on foreign policy issues; communicating opinions to legislators, newspapers and others; participating in political action groups such as a political party, etc.

6. "True" Potency

Perceived influence on public policy, perceived changes in level of knowledge and changes in political activity have been discussed above. These criteria are alike in reflecting the degree to which the member either thinks or acts as though he thinks his political potency has been changed as a consequence of participation. An interesting criterion of program effectiveness, albeit a less accessible one, might be the degree to which the participants's true political potency has been altered. Although a direct measure of influence on policy would not seem to be feasible, it might be assumed that to the extent that analytical skills had been enhanced, information and confidence had been gained and motivation and interest had been generated, the participant would be likely to become a more powerful political force.

Program Conditions

The conditions below have been tentatively selected for study. They represent classes of variables which are either known to constitute or are likely to constitute the important dimensions on which Great Decisions discussion groups vary. The overall study would seek to describe the association between these program conditions and the program outcomes above.

1. General Organization of the Group

a. Sponsorship. Great Decisions groups are sponsored by a wide range of organizations: religious, civic, social, school,

industrial, etc. Other groups are convened independently of any larger group and solely for the purpose of discussing Great Decisions.

b. Saturation vs. non-saturation program. The groups vary from those which simply meet to discuss the issues presented in the Fact Sheet to those which are supported by a variety of mass media presentations. The nature and extent of this support from the mass media was discussed earlier.

2. Group Membership Composition

a. Sex. The numbers of male and female participants in each discussion group would be recorded.

b. Status. The numbers of "opinion leaders" and "opinion followers" would be estimated for each discussion group. This variable might be assessed both by pre-program measures and by within-program communication patterns and would appear to be the most relevant status dimension.

c. Opinion content. Opinions of group members on a sampling of issues of the program would be obtained.

d. Needs and aspirations. The motives of members for joining the program, their expectations and aspirations regarding the program, and the means by which they were recruited would be recorded.

3. Group Structure and Process

a. Group size. FPA recommends groups of from five to fifteen members. The size of the group may be expected to have effects on the participation and satisfaction of members, diversity of opinions, etc. The numbers of participants in the group would be recorded at intervals, in view of possible fluctuations in group size.

b. Role structure. Groups may be expected to function differently when they use an official discussion leader and/or other formal roles such as committees, panels, etc., than when no formal roles are evident. Some general categorization of these various possible roles and their combinations will be sought.

c. Communication pattern. An index would be derived to represent the degree to which participation is distributed within the group as opposed to being confined within member subsets. This variable of the group would most obviously affect the group's success in reaching its goals, and individual member satisfaction.

d. Degree of cohesiveness. Cohesiveness would be conceived as the overall attractiveness of the group for its members. More

cohesive groups would be more likely to be more satisfied and more conforming than less cohesive groups.

4. Group Goals and Tasks

a. Goals. The type of goal to be studied would be the group defined subgoal to the larger Great Decisions goals, which might reflect either special interpretations or elaborations of the larger goals. For example: one group might see participation in the discussion of issues as a desirable end in itself, while another group would stress eventual political participation as the ultimate goal of its program. One group might set the goal of consensus on issues as a major goal of its program while another group would strive for healthy debate and encourage eventual diversity of opinion, etc. The goals which the group either implicitly or explicitly sets for itself should greatly influence the tasks which it would set for itself and the way it would structure its group and its meetings.

b. Tasks and procedures. These might be defined as the means to accomplishment of the group defined goals. Straw votes, reports from individual members, public statements of opinion, formal debate, free discussion, formal speeches, group use of mass media, and other devices would be variously used in different groups and would be conditioned by the nature of the goals which the group had set. A comprehensive listing of these devices would be kept.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

GREAT DECISIONS INTERVIEW GUIDE

Respondent _____ Interviewer _____

R's Group _____ Date _____

Place _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Was this the first time you belonged to a Great Decisions group?

Yes	No
5	25

IF NO:

a. How many times previously?

Frequency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
N Respondents	1	5	2	5	1	5	3	1		2	= 25 Median Years = 4.50

b. Had you belonged to a group with any of the same people before?

Yes	No
20	5

c. How many years has this particular group been together?

Years	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Unknown or Not Reported		
N Groups	3	2	1	3	4	0	3	2	2	0	0	3	= 23	Median Years = 3.13

Note: The 30 respondents represented 23 different discussion groups.

d. What proportion of present members were original members?

25% or Less	26-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%	Unknown or Not Reported	Total
3	2	5	3	4	6	23

2. How did you happen to join the group you were in this year?

PROBES:

a. What were your reasons for joining?

Like discussion	2
Exchange of ideas	1
Something to occupy time	1
Learning	5
Part of ongoing group	10
Continuation of previous year	6
Asked to organize a group	3
Invited by a friend	2
TOTAL	30

b. What did you expect to gain from participation?

Changed opinions	1
Intellectual enjoyment	3
Knowledge and information	19
Insight into foreign affairs	4
Exchange of ideas	1
Stimulation of my reading	1
Friendship	1
TOTAL	30

c. Did you have any reservations about joining? What were these?

Yes	No
2	28

Two Reservations:

1. Worried about ability to pursue required study.
2. Dubious about Great Decisions materials due to poor ones in past.

3. Was your group sponsored by an organization?

Yes	No
10	13

IF YES:

a. Which one?

Types of Sponsorship	N Groups
Unsponsored (friends & neighbors)	13
Sponsored	
Church	5
PTA	2
HADASSAH	2
International Affairs Group	1
TOTAL	23

b. Are you a member of this organization?

Yes	No
13	3

Note: 16 respondents belonged to sponsored groups, 14 to unsponsored.

4. Did you organize your discussion group?

Yes	No
15	15

IF YES:

a. Did you do this alone? (Get names, addresses, phone numbers of other organizers if possible)

Yes (Did it alone)	No (Had help)
7	8

b. Had you organized other groups before?

Yes	No
13	2

5. Were you a discussion leader of your group?

Yes (At least once)	No (Never)
22	8

IF YES:

a. How often?

Meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Frequency	15	5	-	-	-	-	-	2	= 22

b. Had you had previous discussion leader experience?

Yes	No
19	3

c. How do you feel about your performance as leader?

Completely satisfied	10
Moderately satisfied	5
One or more reservations	7

Reservations Cited:

1. More authoritative person needed.
2. People's ideas weren't changed. (?)
3. Doesn't like the role.
4. Would prefer to be discussant so could participate more.
5. Could use more leadership practice (cited twice).
6. Unsure of handling of aggressive and dogmatic members.

6. How large was your group? What was the typical attendance at meetings?

Members	N Groups
5 or less	0
6 - 10	4
11 - 15	12
16 - 20	6
21 - 25	0
26 or more	1
TOTAL	23

Typical Attendance	N Groups
20% or less	0
21 - 40%	0
41 - 60%	6
61 - 80%	8
81 - 100%	9
TOTAL	23

7. How many members of your group were men? Women? Married? Single?

Group Sex Composition	N Groups
All male	0
All female	9
Approximately even split	12
Other	2
TOTAL	23

Estimated Numbers of Males, Females, Married, and Single, Over All Groups (Total Estimated N = 346)

Males	Females	Married	Single
117 (34%)	229 (66%)	314 (91%)	32 (9%)

8. Tell me something about the composition of your group.

PROBES:

a. Age of members?

Range of Member Ages

Groups with age spread 10 years or less	7
Groups with age spread 11-20 years	11
Groups with age spread 21 years or more	5
TOTAL	23

b. Socioeconomic level?

Class Membership

All groups were described as middle or upper middle, with the exception of one described as lower middle.

Two groups were reported to have some upper-class members.

c. Political affiliations?

Political Affiliations	N Groups
Predominantly democrats	7
Predominantly republicans	6
Approximately evenly split	7
Other	
Wide range "liberals and radicals"	1
50% independent, 30% republican, 20% democrat	1
33% independent, 33% republican, 33% democrat	1
TOTAL	23

Summary

Generally Homogenous 13

Generally Heterogenous 10

d. Opinions?

Range of Opinion	N Groups
Group has great diversity of opinion	7
Group has diversity of opinion	5
Group has homogeneity of opinion	11
TOTAL	23

Note: These estimates should be considered very cautiously, due to the obvious incomparability in the perceptions and descriptions of diversity among respondents. For example, in several instances different members of the same group characterized group opinion differently (e.g., "Homogenous" vs. "Diverse").

e. Religion?

Religion of groups was classified as highly diverse, moderately diverse, or homogenous on the basis of respondent estimates of numbers of Protestant, Catholics, Jews, etc.

Religiously highly diverse	4
Religiously moderately diverse	11
Religiously homogenous	8
TOTAL	23

f. Neighborhood?

All groups were composed of persons from same or similar neighborhoods.

g. How would you characterize the group's composition? (Very homogeneous, homogeneous, diverse, very diverse)

Respondent Overall Assessments of Homogeneity - Diversity Compared to Three Individually Rated Group Characteristics
(S = Sponsored Groups)

Group	Respondent Rating	Age Spread*	Political Affiliation**	Opinions*
1	Very Diverse	2	1	3
2(S)	Diverse	1	1	2
3(S)	Homogenous--Very Homogenous (2 R's)	2	1	1
4	Homogenous	2	1	1
5	Diverse	1	1	1
6(S)	Homogenous	1	1	1
7	Homogenous	1	2	3
8	Diverse	3	2	1
9(S)	Homogenous--Homogenous-Diverse (3 R's)	3	1	1
10	Very Diverse	2	1	3
11	Homogenous	1	1	1

(cont.)

Respondent Overall Assessments of

Homogeneity - Diversity Compared to Three Individually Rated Group Characteristics

Group	Respondent Rating	Age Spread*	Political Affiliation**	Opinions*
12(S)	Diverse	2	2	3
13	Homogenous	1	2	3
14(S)	Homogenous	3	1	1
15	Diverse - Homogenous (2 R's)	2	2	3
16(S)	Homogenous	2	1	3
17(S)	Homogenous	2	1	2
18(S)	Homogenous	2	2	2
19	Homogenous	3	2	1
20	Very Homogenous	2	1	1
21(S)	Homogenous	3	2	1
22	Diverse	1	2	2
23	Diverse - Homogenous (2 R's)	2	2	2

* 1 = homogenous, 2 = moderately diverse, 3 = highly diverse
** 1 = homogenous, 2 = diverse

Note: The undependability of this data is indicated by: (1) inconsistency among the four kinds of ratings; and (2) disagreements between overall ratings by different members of the same group.

	Very Homogenous	Homogenous	Diverse	Very Diverse	Rated Differently by Two or More Members
Sponsored Groups	0	7	1	0	2*
Unsponsored Groups	1	4	4	1	2

* Both of these groups could considered homogenous; their ratings were homogenous - very homogenous and homogenous - homogenous - diverse.

9. Did you know any of the people in the group before you joined?

Yes	No
30	0

Of the 30, 2 knew only one member previously; 3 knew 2 members previously.

IF YES:

How did you happen to know them:

Basis of Acquaintanceship (Very Rough)

Social	5
Organizational	22
Both	1
Questionable	2
TOTAL	30

10. How many members of the group do you see socially outside the meetings? About how often?

Degree of Outside Association (Very Rough)	
"All"	5
"Many or most"	4
"A few"	6
"One or two"	8
"None"	5
Unspecified	2
TOTAL	30

NOW PRESENT PREPARATION CHECKLIST TO RESPONDENT.

GROUP FUNCTION

11. What did you do during your group meetings? (Let respondent describe meetings.)

Formats of Typical Group Meetings

Group	Sequence of Activities
1	LP -- DQ -- OB
2	LP -- DQ -- OB
3	DQ -- D -- OB
4	Unspecified
5	Variable and informal
6	Read fact sheets at meeting (This group disbanded after 2 meetings.)
7	LP -- FSD
8	LP -- (Occasional OS) -- D
9	DQ -- D -- OB
10	Watched public affairs TV programs -- D
11	Unspecified
12	Very informal
13	Unspecified
14	LP -- D -- DQ
15	FSD -- DQ -- OB
16	DQ -- D
17	Split into 2 sub-groups -- DQ in each -- Reformed -- D
18	Split into 2 sub-groups -- DQ in each -- Reformed -- D
19	Unspecified
20	Unspecified
21	Leader asked questions
22	Informal, DQ -- LP
23	Reviewed prior session -- DQ -- Outside readings always presented by members

Code: LP = presentation by leader
D = open discussion
DQ = discussion of questions in fact sheet
OB = completed opinion ballots
FSD = discussion of fact sheet
OS = outside speaker

THEN USE ITEMS 12 THROUGH 17 AS PROBES. OMIT QUESTIONS COVERED SPONTANEOUSLY.

12. Was there a discussion leader?

Yes	No
22	1

Types of Leadership

Single leader	19
Co-leaders	3
Same leader or leaders all meetings	13
Rotating leadership	9

Summary of Types of Leadership	N Groups
Regular-single leader (RS)	11
Regular - co-leaders (RC)	0
Rotating single leader (ROS)	7
Rotating co-leaders (ROC)	3
TOTAL	21*

*1 group held just two meetings, one of which was led.

IF YES:

a. How well did he keep the discussion going? How well did he elicit participation?

	N Groups
Very well	8
Not well	2
No need to encourage cooperation-- cooperation spontaneous	7*
Fair	2
Don't know	2
TOTAL	22

*Most of these remarked that problem of leadership more usually in keeping group focused than in encouraging participation.

b. How would you describe the leader in terms of dominating the meetings vs. encouragement of contributions?

Performance	Leadership Types RS	ROS*	ROC*
Dominated	1	---	---
Encouraged	9	---	---
Generally "weak"	1	---	---

*This dimension could not be reliably assessed where reports concerned more than one leader or where two members or more evaluated a single leader.

13. Was a vote taken on the Opinion Ballot during any of your group's meetings? How often was this done?

Yes (Everytime)	No (Never)
17	6

IF MORE THAN ONCE:

a. How was this done? (secret ballot, publicly, one at a time, all at once)

Individually by secret ballot	13* groups
Individually by public ballot	4 groups

*Some filled out at home.

b. Was there any effort to get agreement on the opinion ballot? Was agreement reached?

Yes	No
3	14

Agreement Reached (Yes)	
"Often"	Group 3
"Some"	Group 10
"Frequently"	Group 15

c. In general, was your group interested in getting consensus? More interested in discussion for its own sake?

Consensus	Non-Consensus
2	15

d. How did you feel about this--did you think it would be a good thing if people could agree?

Yes	No	Don't Care
2	18	3

14. Did your group use any other formal devices during its discussions? (Outside speakers, reports from individual members, committees, panels, regulatory devices, etc.)

Yes	No
25	5

IF YES:

a. What were these devices?

Devices Used	N Groups
1. Guest speaker at at least one meeting	
1 speaker	2
2 speakers	4
6 speakers	1
Didn't know how many	3
TOTAL	10

2. Newspaper and Magazine Articles, Other Supplementary Materials	5
3. Resource Person at Least Once	2
4. Other	2
Maps, quiz	1
TV programs	1
5. None	5

b. How effective were they?

	Effective	Not Effective	Variable or Unspecified
Speakers (10 groups)	6	2	2
Resource Persons (2 groups)	0	1	1
Articles	1	1	3
Other	"Maps helpful, quiz not"		

15. Did your group conduct an issues conference with a representative as suggested by FPA?

Yes	No
0	23*

*One group tried but was unable to get a representative.

16. Did your group conduct any other political or foreign affairs activity as a group?

Yes	No
2	21

IF YES:

a. What was this activity?
b. How did it work out?

Yes	Activity	Effect
Group 14	Foreign Student Program	Created much goodwill
Group 21	War and Peace Discussion	Excellent

17. How would you describe the atmosphere of your group and the relationships among members? Were you satisfied with the communication among the members?

Congenial	Not Congenial (Angry)
21	2

IF NO:

How might it have been improved?

Improvements Suggested

1. Group 3 needs more stimulating atmosphere--more formal leadership might help.
2. Group 4 needs more diverse opinions, but shouldn't be more cordial.
3. Group 5's leader could avert personal clashes or "could avoid having dogmatic people in the group."
4. Group 6 might have had better participation with formal devices like speeches.
5. Group 11 needs more consistent attendance and more diversity of background.
6. Group 12 "could be improved in approach and attitudes;" need for leadership training.
7. Group 15 needs to keep on subject.
8. Group 19 needs "improvement in members' backgrounds, certain topics, e.g., religious programs felt to be too sensitive for interpersonal comfort."
9. Group 23 needs more redirection or refocusing and more attention to what individuals were saying.

NOW PRESENT PERCEIVED OUTCOMES CHECKLIST TO RESPONDENT.

ACTIONS

18. Did the discussions in your group have any effect on your opinions concerning certain issues?

Yes	No
24	6

IF YES:

a. What effects?

Effects on Opinions	
Opinions changed	8
Opinions made more flexible	3
Opinions broadened	5
Opinions solidified--made firmer	2
Opinions clarified	2
Opinions formed	5
TOTAL	25

b. What issues?

Issues Specifically Involved in Some of Above Changes

Issues	Times Cited
Viet Nam	10
Israel-Arab Dispute	7
Africa	4
Red China	3
Russia	2
Foreign Aid	2
Eastern Europe	1
NATO	1
Japan	1
"All"	1
"No particular"	1
TOTAL	33

c. Why do you feel that you changed in this way?

Factors Principally Responsible for Effects

Factors	Times Cited
"Information"	7
Fact sheets	7
Group discussion	4
Various or all sources	3
Unknown	2
TOTAL	24

19. During or since your participation in Great Decisions, have you written to any newspaper or other publication concerning foreign affairs?

Yes	No
6	24

IF YES:

a. What did you write about?
b. How did you happen to decide to write? (as a group activity; on your own)
c. Had you ever done this prior to Great Decisions?

Respondent	Issue Involved	On Own	Prior to Great Decisions
1	Arms to Egypt	Yes	No
2	"A Senator's Comments"	Yes	Yes
3	A Conference's Treatment of Asia	Yes	No
4	Viet Nam; Capital Punishment	Yes	Yes
5	UNICEF	Yes	Yes
6	Viet Nam	Yes	Yes

20. During or since your participation in Great Decisions, have you taken any other political actions concerning foreign affairs?

Foreign affairs actions	9 respondents
Domestic policy actions	3 respondents
Neither	18 respondents
TOTAL	30

IF YES:

a. What was the action taken?

Types of Foreign Affairs Actions

Communicated with public officials	8
Member of a citizens' committee	1
TOTAL	9

b. How did you happen to do this? (as a group activity; on your own)
c. Had you ever done this prior to Great Decisions?

Foreign Affairs Actions	On Own	Prior to Great Decisions
1	Yes	No
2	Yes	Yes
3	No	Yes
4	Yes	Yes
5	No	No
6	Yes	Yes
7	Yes	Yes
8	No	Yes
9	Unspecified	Unspecified
Domestic Policy Actions		
1	Unspecified	Unspecified
2	Yes	No
3	No	Yes

NOW PRESENT SATISFACTION CHECKLIST TO RESPONDENT.

PREPARATION

Name _____

Date _____

Please describe your typical preparation for Great Decisions meetings by checking the appropriate space for each item below.

	TIME DEVOTED			
	None	An hour or less	1-2 hours	More than 2 hours
1. FACT SHEETS	___	___	___	___
2. READINGS suggested in the Fact Sheets	___	___	___	___
3. OTHER READINGS which I selected myself	___	___	___	___

In the following items, please check the number of articles and/or broadcasts you usually use to prepare for Great Decisions meetings. Please indicate if these are not available to you.

	NUMBER USED				
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	Not Available
4. Special Great Decisions newspaper articles	___	___	___	___	___
5. Educational TV broadcasts	___	___	___	___	___
6. Great Decisions radio broadcasts	___	___	___	___	___

PARTICIPATION

7. How many meetings did your discussion group hold? _____

8. How many of them did you attend? _____

9. How would you describe your participation in the meetings?

___ a. Very active
___ b. Moderately active
___ c. Not very active
___ d. Inactive

10. During the course of the program, my preparation for meetings:

___ a. Increased greatly
___ b. Increased slightly
___ c. Decreased slightly
___ d. Decreased greatly
___ e. Stayed about the same

11. During the course of the program, my participation in the meetings:

___ a. Increased greatly
___ b. Increased slightly
___ c. Decreased slightly
___ d. Decreased greatly
___ e. Stayed about the same

PERCEIVED OUTCOMES

Name _____

Date _____

Think about your foreign affairs interest and activities prior to your first experience with Great Decisions. Check the following items to indicate what effects, if any, Great Decisions participation has had on your skills, interests, and activities.

	Increased	Decreased	About the same
1. Knowledge of public affairs	_____	_____	_____
2. Reading about public affairs	_____	_____	_____
3. Listening, watching public affairs broadcasts, speeches, etc.	_____	_____	_____
4. Talking to people (outside Great Decisions) about public affairs	_____	_____	_____
5. My ability to discuss public affairs	_____	_____	_____
6. Objectivity	_____	_____	_____
7. Tolerance for disagreement	_____	_____	_____
8. Discussion skills	_____	_____	_____

SATISFACTION

Name _____

Date _____

1. How would you describe your overall satisfaction with the "Great Decisions" Program?

____ Very satisfied
____ Moderately satisfied
____ Moderately dissatisfied
____ Very dissatisfied

2. How likely are you to participate in "Great Decisions" next year?

____ Very likely
____ Fairly likely
____ Fairly unlikely
____ Very unlikely

3. To what extent would you encourage your friends to join "Great Decisions" groups?

____ Would strongly encourage
____ Would moderately encourage
____ Would discourage
____ Would say nothing about it

4. To what extent would you like to participate with the same group again, if you were to participate again?

____ Very much ____ Somewhat ____ Not very much ____ Not at all

5. Compared to all other similar groups in which you have participated (including other "Great Decisions" groups and earlier versions of the same group), describe your most recent "Great Decisions" group.

a. ____ Very productive
____ Moderately productive
____ Moderately unproductive
____ Very unproductive

b. ____ Liked very much
____ Liked
____ Disliked
____ Disliked very much

c. ____ Very important
____ Moderately important
____ Moderately unimportant
____ Very unimportant

6. How likely are you to participate in some other (not "Great Decisions") discussion group next year?

____ Very likely
____ Fairly likely
____ Fairly unlikely
____ Very unlikely

APPENDIX C

GREAT DECISIONS SURVEY FORM

APPENDIX C

GREAT DECISIONS SURVEY FORM

The more we know about you who discuss the "Great Decisions," the better we can design the discussion materials in the years ahead. You will be helping us and the educational objectives of this program, if you will take a few minutes to answer these questions and send your answers to Foreign Policy Association, 345 East 46th St., New York, N. Y. 10017.

1. Do you presently belong to a "Great Decisions" discussion group?

   Yes 94% No 6%

2. Have you ever been in a "Decisions" discussion group before?

   Yes 42% No 58%

3. Have you ever been in any foreign affairs discussion group other than "Great Decisions"?

   Yes 28% No 72%

4. How did you hear about "Great Decisions"? (Check as many as apply.)

   Radio or TV 25% Newspaper 38% Meetings 24% Letter 7%

   Friend 50% Other (please specify) 33%

5. Did you personally take an active part in organizing your "Great Decisions" group?

Yes 39% No 61%

6. How did you happen to know the person(s) who invited you to join (or form) a "Great Decisions" group? (Check as many as apply.)

Same church 28% Work together 12% Through school 14%

Through another organization 31% Neighbors 26%

Other (please specify) 26%

7. How many members are there in the group? (Write number)

Estimated Distribution of Size of Discussion Group*

Number of Members	% of all groups of 1-25 persons
0-5	7%
6-10	43%
11-15	30%
16-20	13%
21-25	7%

* An estimated minimum of 50-60 groups are represented in the sample by at least one return.

8. Are you sharing your "Great Decisions" Fact Sheet Kit?

Do not share 67% Share with one other person 28%

Share with more than one other person 5%

9. People join "Great Decisions" discussion groups for a number of reasons. Please read the list of reasons below and write the number "1" next to the reasons which was most important for you, the number "2" next to the second most important, and the number "3" next to the third most important. (Mark only the three most important; leave others blank.)

Reasons for Joining the Program (Approximate figures)

	% ranking first, second, and third*		
Category	First	Second	Third
To participate in an interesting activity	10%	13%	18%
To get better informed about foreign affairs	70%	18%	6%
To get better acquainted with people of similar interests	16%	4%	7%
To exchange views with other people	8%	34%	26%
To have my opinions heard in Washington	2%	6%	12%
To improve my ability to analyze and discuss problems	7%	22%	22%
Other	2%	1%	2%

* Columns do not add to 100% since all errors in marking questionnaire (i.e., using check mark or X) were scored as though given a rank of one.

10. How often do you get information or hear opinions about foreign affairs from each of the following sources? (Place only one check in each horizontal row.)

	Never	Once a year or less	Several times a year	About once a month	Several times a month	About once a week	Several times a week
Radio & TV	2%	0%	1%	2%	4%	7%	84%
Local newspapers	5%	1%	0%	1%	2%	5%	87%
Other newspapers	26%	4%	5%	6%	6%	20%	33%
News magazines	9%	2%	3%	7%	11%	42%	26%
Other magazines	21%	2%	9%	19%	19%	14%	15%
Books	18%	14%	35%	13%	7%	4%	9%
Lectures	26%	21%	36%	7%	4%	2%	5%
Organized discussion groups (other than "Great Decisions")	50%	24%	11%	8%	3%	4%	2%

11. Have you happened to write a letter to any government official, congressman, or publication (letter to editor, etc.) in the past three years?

No 35% Yes, one 13% Yes, two or three 23% Yes, more than three 29%

12. Please fill in the following information about organizations to which you belong:

Hours Devoted to Other Organizations

	Estimated number of Respondents	Time Devoted 1-5 hrs.	6-10 hrs.	11-20 hrs.	More than 20 hrs.
One organization	346	40%	28%	19%	13%
Second organization	249	53%	30%	15%	5%
Third organization	167	62%	21%	14%	2%
Fourth organization	96	68%	20%	9%	3%

Have you been an officer in the past five years?

One organization	Yes 60%	No 40%
Second organization	Yes 48%	No 52%
Third organization	Yes 45%	No 55%
Fourth organization	Yes 36%	No 64%

13. Some information about you:

Male 25% Female 75%

Education:

Some high school or less 2% High school graduate 8% Some college 18%

College graduate 42% Advanced degree 30%

Age Distribution of Members

Age group	% of respondents
20 or under	6%
21 - 25	8%
26 - 30	11%
31 - 35	11%
36 - 40	12%
41 - 45	12%
46 - 50	11%
51 - 55	8%
56 - 60	8%
61 - 65	6%
66 - 70	5%
71 and over	2%

Mean age = 42

What is your occupation?

29% Professionals (Clergymen, Dentists, Lawyers, Physicians, Teachers, etc.)

6% Proprietors, managers, officials (including farmers)

4% Clerks and kindred workers

2% Skilled workers and foremen

\- Semi and unskilled workers

41% Housewives

6% Students

2% Retired

1% Military

9% No occupation stated

Income of head of household:

Under $7500 28% $7500-12,000 38% $12,001-25,000 26% Over $25,000 8%

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF
"GREAT DECISIONS" 1965 SURVEY RETURNS
(N = 547)

Arizona (1-2)

Chandler	1
Springerville	1

Arkansas (3-47)

Conway	5
Fayetteville	9
Fort Smith	6
Jacksonville	2
Little Rock	16
Other	7

California (48-86)

Berkeley	2
Palo Alto	5
Riverside	4
San Bernardino	7
San Francisco	5
Watsonville	2
Other	14

Colorado (87-118)

Colorado Springs	5
Denver	14
Greeley	2
Lakewood	3
Sterling	2
Wheat Ridge	4
Other	2

Connecticut (119-126)

Norwalk	3
Other	5

Delaware (127)

Wilmington	1

Florida (128-132)

Fort Lauderdale	1
St. Petersburg	2
Coral Gables	1
Miami	1

Georgia (133-134)

Decatur	1
Macon	1

Idaho (135-138)

Twin Falls	3
Kimberly	1

Illinois (139-155)

La Grange	4
Pekin	5
Other	8

Indiana (156-158)

Fort Wayne	1
South Bend	1
Indianapolis	1

Iowa (159-173)

Des Moines	2
Iowa City	12
Waverly	1

Kansas (174-183)

Shawnee Mission	2
Topeka	2
Other	6

Kentucky (184-188)

Louisville	5

Maryland (189-203)

Baltimore	12
Other	3

Massachusetts (204-237)

Southwick	2
Springfield	12
Wilbraham	9
Other	11

Michigan (238-277)

Detroit	10
Grosse Pt. Woods	2
Ironwood	5
Kalamazoo	2
Pleasant Ridge	2
Royal Oak	3
Southfield	3
Troy	4
Wakefield	2
Other	7

Minnesota (278-279)

Minneapolis	1
Winona	1

Missouri (280-283)

Kansas City	2
Other	2

Nebraska (284-288)

Grand Island	2
Lincoln	2
West Point	1

New Hampshire (289)

Berlin	1

New Jersey (290-296)

Mountain Lakes	4
Other	3

New Mexico (297-302)

Albuquerque	2
Las Vegas	2
Other	2

New York (303-329)

Albany	3
Bronx	2
New York City	2
Schenectady	2
Other	18

North Carolina (330-344)

Greensboro	6
Shelby	7
Other	2

Ohio (345-366)

Akron	2
Columbus	4
Fostoria	2
Sandusky	5
Toledo	2
Warren	2
Other	5

Oklahoma (367-372)

Langston	2
Stillwater	3
Oklahoma City	1

Oregon (373-443)

Astoria	9
Chemult	6
Coos Bay	8
The Dalles	5
Eugene	3
Klamath Falls	2
Portland	17
Salem	5
Springfield	5
Troutdale	2
Other	10

Pennsylvania (444-456)

Bethlehem	2
Gladwyne	2
Other	9

South Dakota (457-464)

Yankton	8

Tennessee (465-474)

Memphis	4
Nashville	6

Texas (475-480)

San Antonio	2
Waco	2
Other	2

Vermont (481-482)

Bennington	2

Virginia (483-484)

Roanoke	1
Lynchburg	1

Washington (485-489)

Seattle	3
Other	2

Washington, D. C. (490-493)	4

Wisconsin (494-519)

Mazomanie	9
Mequon	2
Wauwatosa	4
West Bend	7
Other	4

Wyoming (520)

Casper	1

Venezuela (521)	1

Origin Unknown	26

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE I

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE I

Name _____

Date _____

1. How did you hear about Great Decisions? (Check as many as apply.)

____ Radio

____ TV

____ Newspaper

____ At meetings of an organization

____ From a friend

____ Through your company

____ Letter from foreign affairs organization

____ Other

2. How did you happen to know the person(s) who invited you to join (or form) a Great Decisions group? (Check primary connection only.)

____ Same church

____ Work together

____ Through school

____ Friends

____ Neighbors

____ Friends and neighbors

____ Other

3. Did you know any of the people in your group before you joined. Yes____ No____

How many? ____ How did you happen to know them? _____

4. People join Great Decisions discussion groups for a number of reasons. Please read the following list of reasons and write the number "1" next to the reason which was most important for you and the number "2" next to the second most important. (Mark only the two most important; leave others blank.)

____ To participate in an interesting intellectual activity.

____ To get better informed about foreign affairs.

____ To get better acquainted with people of similar interests.

____ To exchange views with other people.

____ To have my opinions heard in Washington.

____ To broaden my outlook.

____ To improve my general ability to analyze and discuss problems.

____ Other (please write in) _____

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE II

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE II

PREPARATION

Name _____

Date _____

Please describe you typical preparation for Great Decisions meetings by checking the appropriate space for each item below.

	TIME DEVOTED			
	None	An hour or less	1-2 hours	More than 2 hours
1. FACT SHEETS	___	___	___	___
2. READINGS suggested in the Fact Sheets	___	___	___	___
3. OTHER READINGS which I selected myself	___	___	___	___

In the following items, please check the number of articles and/or broadcasts you usually use to prepare for Great Decisions meetings. Please indicate if these are not available to you.

	NUMBER USED				
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	Not Available
4. Special Great Decisions newspaper articles	___	___	___	___	___
5. Educational TV broadcasts	___	___	___	___	___
6. Great Decisions radio broadcasts	___	___	___	___	___

PARTICIPATION

7. How many meetings did your discussion group hold? _____

8. How many of them did you attend? _____

9. How would you describe your participation in the meetings?

____ a. Very active

____ b. Moderately active

____ c. Not very active

____ d. Inactive

10. During the course of the program, my preparation for meetings:

____ a. Increased greatly

____ b. Increased slightly

____ c. Decreased slightly

____ d. Decreased greatly

____ e. Stayed about the same

11. During the course of the program, my participation in the meetings:

____ a. Increased greatly

____ b. Increased slightly

____ c. Decreased slightly

____ d. Decreased greatly

____ e. Stayed about the same

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE III

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE III

Name _____

Date _____

Below is a list of words which can be used to describe some aspects of "Great Decisions" and your participation in the program. You will notice that the word pairs are opposites. Somewhere along the line between the pair of words, place a check to indicate how you would describe the aspect of "Great Decisions" to which the item pertains. Please place your checks on the vertical marks rather than on the spaces between them. Work rapidly, but do not skip any items.

Using the following list of words, describe the "Great Decisions" FACT SHEET which you used to prepare for tonight's meeting.

Interesting	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Dull
Informative	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Uninformative
Biased	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Objective
Easy	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Difficult
Superficial	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Penetrating
Brief	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Lengthy
Unnecessary	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Essential

If you watched it, use the following list to describe the educational TV PROGRAM dealing with tonight's topic. If you did not watch it, skip this item.

Disorganized	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Organized
Dull	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Interesting
Competent	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Incompetent
Biased	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Objective
Easy	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Difficult
Informative	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Uninformative
Superficial	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Penetrating
Unnecessary	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Essential

QUESTIONNAIRE III-2

If you read it, use the following list to describe the NEWSPAPER ARTICLE (UPI article) dealing with tonight's topic. If you did not read it, skip this item.

Competent	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Incompetent
Dull	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Interesting
Objective	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Biased
Uninformative	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Informative
Penetrating	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Superficial
Unnecessary	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Essential

Using the following list, describe TONIGHT'S MEETING of your discussion group.

Friendly	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Unfriendly
Organized	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Disorganized
Unproductive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Productive
Dull	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Exciting
Emotional	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Analytical
Sociable	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Unsociable

Using the following list, describe YOUR BEHAVIOR during tonight's meeting.

Productive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Unproductive
Following	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Leading
Analytical	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Emotional
Sociable	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Unsociable
Uninfluential	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Influential
Perceptive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Imperceptive
Competitive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Cooperative
Inattentive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Attentive
Informed	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Uninformed

QUESTIONNAIRE III-3

YOUR BEHAVIOR (cont.)

Considerate	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Inconsiderate
Stubborn	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Yielding

Using the following list, describe the behavior of the other GROUP MEMBERS at tonight's meeting.

Unproductive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Productive
Leading	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Following
Emotional	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Analytical
Unsociable	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Sociable
Influential	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Uninfluential
Imperceptive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Perceptive
Cooperative	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Competitive
Attentive	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Inattentive
Uninformed	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Informed
Inconsiderate	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Considerate
Yielding	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Stubborn

OVERALL RATINGS

To what extent has belonging to "Great Decisions" contributed to your knowledge of foreign affairs?

Very much	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Very little

To what extent has belonging to "Great Decisions" contributed to your discussion skills?

Very little	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	Very much

How has belonging to "Great Decisions" affected your way of thinking about foreign affairs?

More firm	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	More flexible

QUESTIONNAIRE III-4

How would you describe your overall SATISFACTION with the "Great Decisions" Program?

Satisfied : : : : : : : : Dissatisfied

How likely are you to participate in "Great Decisions" NEXT YEAR?

Very likely : : : : : : : : Not likely

To what extent would you like to participate with the SAME GROUP again, if you were to participate again?

Not at all : : : : : : : : Very much

Compared to all other similar groups in which you have participated (including other "Great Decisions" groups), describe YOUR PRESENT "GREAT DECISIONS" GROUP.

Most productive : : : : : : : : Least Productive

Like least : : : : : : : : Like most

Most important : : : : : : : : Least important

How likely are you to participate in some other (not "Great Decisions") discussion group next year?

Vegt likely : : : : : : : : Not likely

* * *

To what extent have your group discussions been affected by having an OBSERVER present?

Very much : : : : : : : : Very little

APPENDIX G

GREAT DECISIONS

OBSERVER'S INTERACTION RECORD

APPENDIX G

GREAT DECISIONS OBSERVER'S INTERACTION RECORD

Instructions to Observer

You are to record all utterances which have a duration of at least one sentence (e.g., the remark "I agree" has a subject and verb, is a sentence and should be recorded). Record the utterance by marking in the appropriate box the number corresponding to the speaker. When the utterance is directed at one person in particular, as opposed to being addressed to the group at large, record the number corresponding to the person to whom it is addressed after the number of the speaker. (If two persons speak simultaneously handle it as follows. Record the utterance for the person who began first. If, and only if, the person(s) who interrupted continues to speak after the first person has finished his utterance, record the utterance of the second person.)

Then record the general content of the utterance in the following way. After the numbers indicating speaker and recipient, mark a T for a task related utterance or an S for an utterance related to social relations among members.

Examples of Task related utterances are:

stating a fact concerning topic of discussion
stating an opinion concerning the topic of discussion
clarifying or explaining aspects of the topic of discussion
providing information concerning the topic of discussion
making an observation or conclusion concerning the topic of discussion
proposing a solution to the discussion problem or topic

Examples of Social relations utterances are:

speaking about a topic unrelated to the topic of discussion
expressing agreement or disagreement with another group member without expanding on what the other has said (e.g., "I agree," "I think that's true," "I disagree")
complimenting or praising another group member
criticizing or ridiculing another group member
telling a joke
offering refreshments

There will be some utterances which will be neither clearly task nor clearly social. In these cases you will need to use your best judgment as to whether the utterance is principally task or principally social. In any event, mark a T or an S for every utterance you have recorded.

The interaction record is divided into eight 15-minute time periods. During the first 15 minutes of the discussion, record your observations, in the order in which they occur, in the box marked minutes 1-15, during

the second 15 minutes in the box marked minutes 16-30, and so on. Be careful to move to the next box at the end of each 15 minutes of discussion.

To summarize, you will need to be on the alert for four things:

1. You must record every utterance of at least one sentence duration by recording the number of the speaker.

2. If the speaker is speaking to some particular other person, record the number corresponding to the person spoken to after the speaker's number.

3. Record the content of the utterance by marking a T for task related utterances or an S for social utterances.

4. Watch the time carefully. Be sure to begin recording in a new box at the end of each 15 minutes of discussion.

Some sample recordings: Person #17 opens the meeting with a joke--record 17 S; Mrs. Jones #8 compliments Mrs. Smith #5 on her dress--record 8-5 S; Person #9 summarizes his reading on the assigned discussion topic during the past week--record 9 T.

As soon after the conclusion of the meeting as possible, summarize your observations on the tables provided. There are two summary tables. The first, called the SUMMARY OF GROUP ACTIVITY, summarizes the utterance rates for each member and each time period of the meeting. To complete this summary count the task and social utterances separately for each member during each time phase of the meeting and enter the totals in the appropriate boxes of the table.

The second table is the SUMMARY OF TWO PERSON INTERCHANGES. This table summarizes, for each member and each time phase of the meeting, those utterances which were directed at a particular other member. For each member count separately the numbers of task utterances and social utterances made to each other member during a given time phase and enter the totals in the appropriate boxes. For example, during the first 15 minutes of the first hour, member #8 made two social utterances to member #3, two social utterances to member #5 and one social utterance to member #19. Thus, in the row for member #8 and in the column labeled S under the time phase 1st Hour, 0-15, record in order, 2-M3, 2-M5, 1-M19.

Be sure to compute and enter row and column totals for both tables.

"Great Decisions" Observer's Interaction Record

Members (Use Mr., Miss, Mrs.)

1	_____	11	_____
2	_____	12	_____
3	_____	13	_____
4	_____	14	_____
5	_____	15	_____
6	_____	16	_____
7	_____	17	_____
8	_____	18	_____
9	_____	19	_____
10	_____	20	_____

Group (community, organization, leader) _____

Time and date _____

Meeting Place _____

Discussion Topic _____

Meeting Number _____

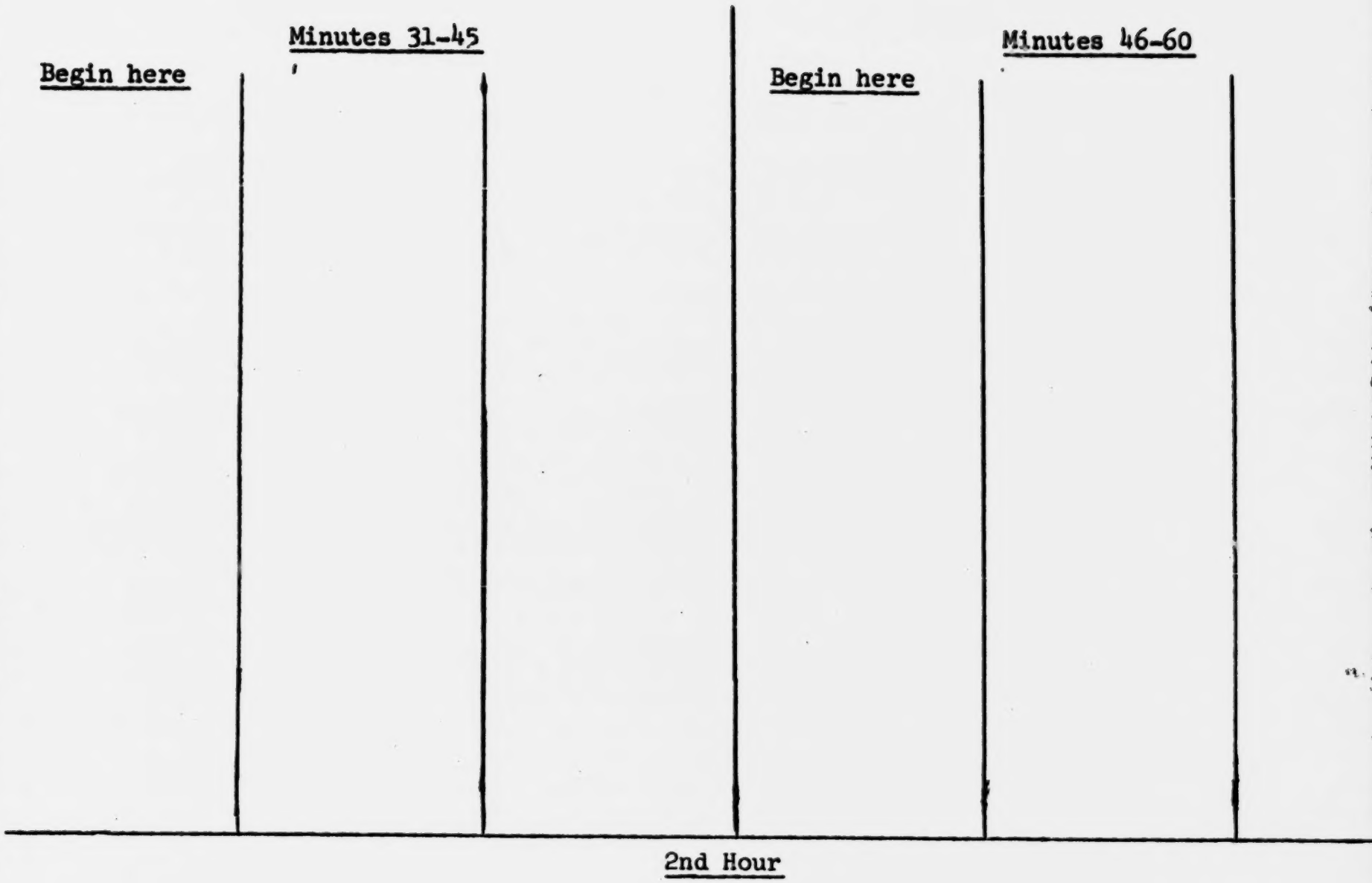
1st Hour

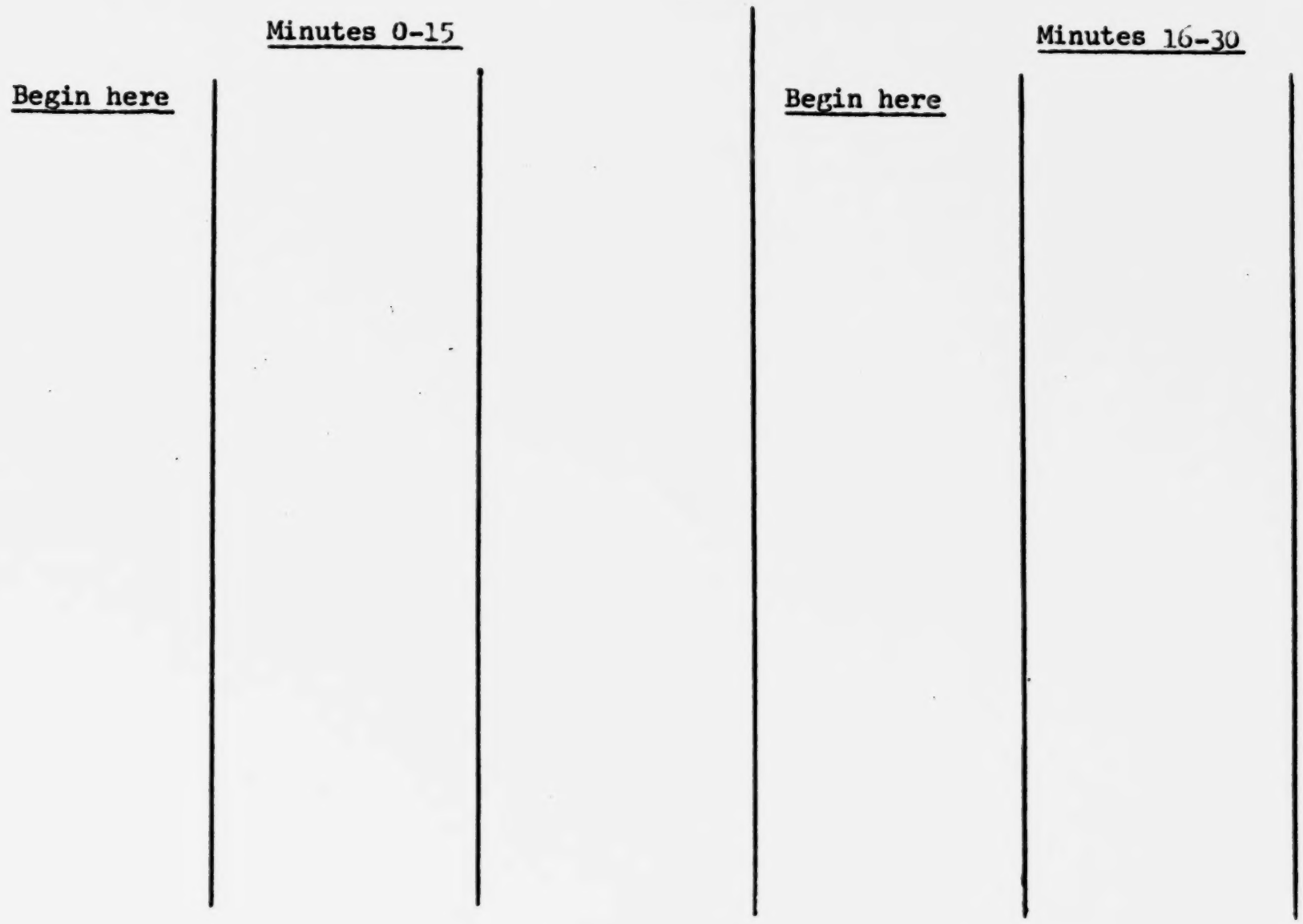
Minutes 0-15

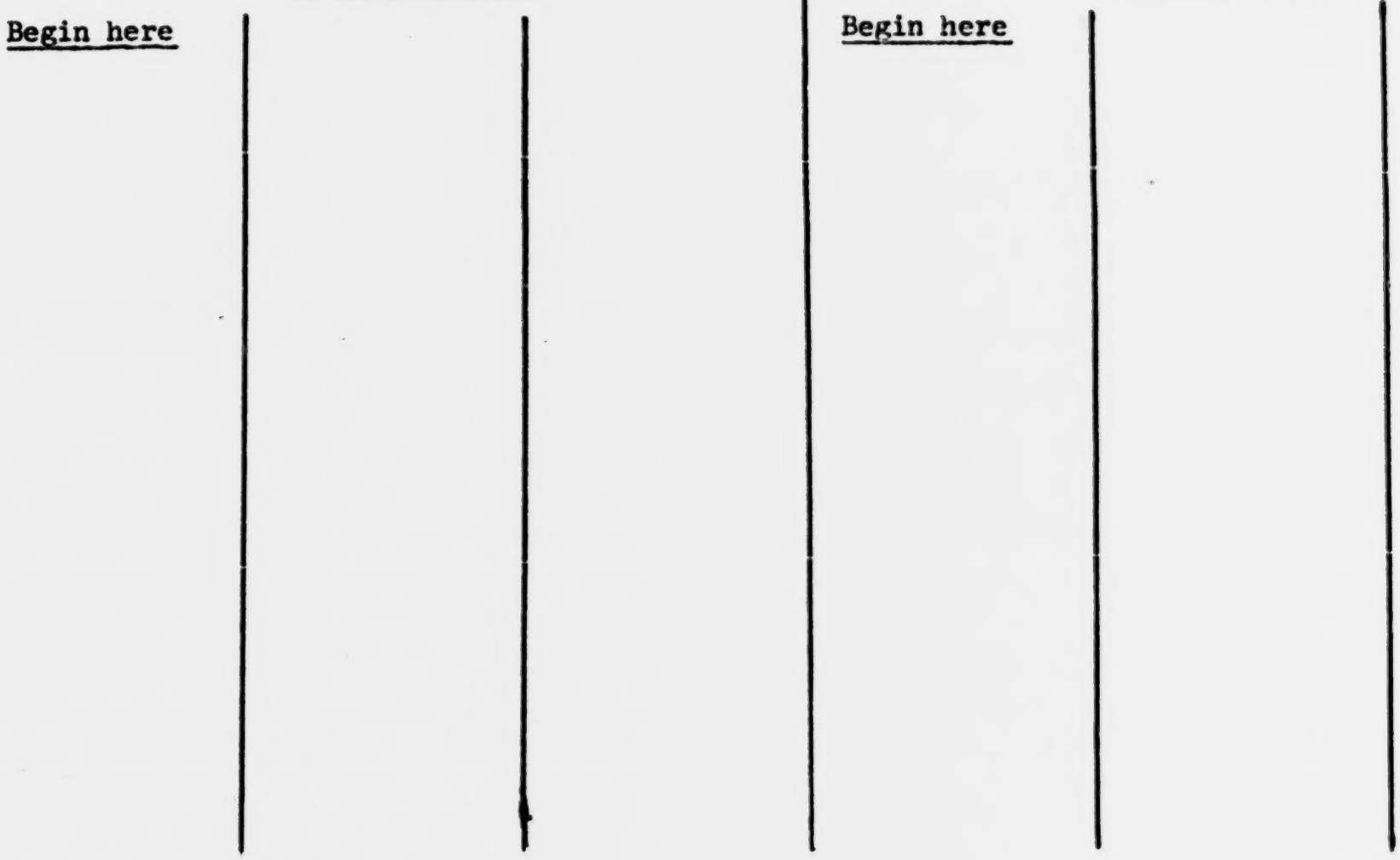
Begin here

Minutes 16-30

Begin here


Minutes 31-45
Begin here
Minutes 46-60
Begin here
2nd Hour


Minutes 0-15
Begin here
Minutes 16-30
Begin here


Minutes 31-45
Begin here
Minutes 46-60
Begin here

Group _____ Meeting Place _____

Time and date _____ Discussion Topic _____

SUMMARY OF GROUP ACTIVITY

Member	Phases: 1st Hour 0-15 T	1st Hour 0-15 S	1st Hour 16-30 T	1st Hour 16-30 S	1st Hour 31-45 T	1st Hour 31-45 S	1st Hour 46-60 T	1st Hour 46-60 S	2nd Hour 0-15 T	2nd Hour 0-15 S	2nd Hour 16-30 T	2nd Hour 16-30 S	2nd Hour 31-45 T	2nd Hour 31-45 S	2nd Hour 46-60 T	2nd Hour 46-60 S	Totals for Members T	Totals for Members S
1																		
2																		
3																		
4																		
5																		
6																		
7																		
8																		
9																		
10																		
11																		
12																		
13																		
14																		
15																		
16																		
17																		
18																		
19																		
20																		
Totals for Phases																		

Group _____ Meeting Place _____

Time and date _____ Discussion Topic _____

SUMMARY OF TWO PERSON INTERCHANGES

(Enter number of utterances to each of persons addressed)

Member	Phase																Totals for Members	
	1st Hour								2nd Hour									
	0-15		16-30		31-45		46-60		0-15		16-30		31-45		46-60			
	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S
1																		
2																		
3																		
4																		
5																		

APPENDIX H

OBSERVER'S FORM FOR
ROLES, GOALS, TASKS AND PROCEDURES

APPENDIX H

OBSERVER'S FORM FOR

ROLES, GOALS, TASKS AND PROCEDURES

Group_____ Place_____

Date_____ Time_____

Observer_____

I. PROCEDURES AND TASKS CHECKLIST (TO BE USED DURING THE MEETING)

Observer: Below is a list of tasks and procedures which might be used by Great Decisions groups. Indicate which of these were used and when they were used by placing a check mark in the appropriate box. Record them when they happen and in the space corresponding to the time when they happen. If you are not sure whether the task or procedure was or was not used, place a 0 in the appropriate space.

	Time Period (minutes)				
	First Hour		Second Hour		
Procedure or Task	1-30	31-60	1-30	31-60	After
Group uses discussion questions on Fact Sheet as basis for discussion					
Group uses Opinion Ballot as basis for discussion					
Group uses Great Decisions newspaper articles as basis for discussion					
Group uses other newspaper or magazine articles as basis for discussion					
Group watches Great Decisions TV program or listens to Great Decisions radio program as a group					
Group conducts closed (secret) vote on Opinion Ballot					
Group conducts open or publically announced vote on Opinion Ballot					
Group conducts totally unstructured, free discussion					

PROCEDURES AND TASKS CHECKLIST (cont.)

Procedure or Task	Time Period (minutes) First Hour 1-30	First Hour 31-60	Second Hour 1-30	Second Hour 31-60	After
Speech or written presentation delivered by group member. Describe briefly:					
Written report distributed by an individual group member. Describe briefly:					
Outside speaker addresses the group. Describe briefly:					
Group uses some device to control the meeting (e.g., cash fines for getting off the discussion topic). Describe briefly:					
Other. Describe briefly:					

THE REMAINING TWO SECTIONS ARE TO BE USED AFTER THE MEETING OF THE DISCUSSION GROUP

II. ROLES OF MEMBERS

Indicate which of the following formal roles were observed during the group meeting and give a brief description of each.

Role	Yes	No	Brief Description
Appointed (formal) discussion leader			

ROLES OF MEMBERS (cont.)

Role	Yes	No	Brief Description
Other formal position (e.g.,secretary, marshall, etc.)			
Committees or panels			
Other formal roles or positions (specify)			

III. GROUP GOALS

Rate the degree to which each of the following possible goals appeared to be a central goal of this discussion group.

1. Consensus on issues

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal

2. Encouragement of differences of opinion

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal

3. Discussion simply for intellectual pleasure

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal

4. Discussion seen as leading to active political or public affairs participation

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal

5. A good time with a socially compatible group

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal

6. Learning as much as possible about foreign affairs

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal

7. Other (specify)

Not a goal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important goal